



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/802,409	03/16/2004	Paul N. Stoving	08215-540001 / P03-026853	3843
26171	7590	07/06/2005	EXAMINER	
FISH & RICHARDSON P.C. P.O. BOX 1022 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55440-1022				FISHMAN, MARINA
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
2832				

DATE MAILED: 07/06/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/802,409	STOVING ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Marina Fishman	2832

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 June 2005.
2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1 – 5, 8, 18 and 21 - 26 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1 – 5, 8, 18 and 21 - 26 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

General status

1. This is a Final Action on the Merits. Claims 1 – 5, 8, 18 and 21 - 26 are pending in the case and are being examined.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1, 3, 4, 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kumbera et al. [US 4,168,414].

Kumbera et al. disclose a vacuum switching device comprising:

- a vacuum interrupter [3];
- a current exchange housing adjacent to the vacuum interrupter [Figure 3];
- a seal [51] provided around the vacuum interrupter and the current exchange housing so as to define a cavity [space between element 50 and bottom end of element 42, Figure 3] within the current exchange housing and adjacent to the vacuum interrupter; and

Art Unit: 2832

- a tube [47] provided within the seal, the tube disposed such that a first end of the tube accesses the cavity and a second end of the tube accesses an exterior of the seal;
- an operating rod [40]

4. Claims 1 - 4, 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Pflanz [US 3,849,617].

Pflanz disclose a vacuum switching device comprising:

- a vacuum interrupter [10];
- a current exchange housing adjacent to the vacuum interrupter [Figure 1];
- a seal [11,14] provided around the vacuum interrupter and the current exchange housing so as to define a cavity [71,72, 23] within the current exchange housing and adjacent to the vacuum interrupter; and
- a tube [24; Column 2, lines 60-65] provided within the seal, the tube disposed such that a first end of the tube accesses the cavity and a second end of the tube accesses an exterior of the seal;
- an operating rod [27].

Regarding Claim 2, the tube [24] is functionally equivalent to a syringe needle

Art Unit: 2832

inserted through the seal. The tube [24] functions to evacuate the air from the cavity. A syringe needle is merely a hollow tube that in the instant invention performs the same function as Pflanz's tube [24].

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 5 and 18 - 26 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pflanz [US 3,849,617].

Pflanz disclose a vacuum switching device comprising:

- a vacuum interrupter [10];
- a current exchange housing adjacent to the vacuum interrupter [Figure 1];
- a seal [11,14] provided around the vacuum interrupter and the current exchange housing so as to define a cavity [71,72, 23] within the current exchange housing and adjacent to the vacuum interrupter; and
- a tube [24; Column 2, lines 60-65] provided within the seal, the tube disposed such that a first end of the tube accesses the cavity and a second end of the tube accesses an exterior of the seal;

an operating rod [27].

Regarding Claims 18 and 23, Pflanz discloses that the tube [24] is sealed [Column 2, line 66]. The limitation "sealed with cured encapsulation..." (Claim 18) and "tube is integrally formed... during formation of the seal" (Claim 23) are being treated as a product by process limitation. As set forth in MPEP 2113, product by process claims are NOT limited to the manipulation of the recited steps. The tube [24] provided by Pflanz is structurally identical to that claimed by Applicant. Therefore, the burden is shifted to Applicant to show an unobvious difference [MPEP 2113].

Regarding Claims 5 and 25, Pflanz discloses that that the seal [11,14] can be made of any suitable material [Column 2, lines 48 – 51]. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have the encapsulation material include a pre-filled, hot-curing, two-component epoxy resin, since it is been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability. [In re Leshin, 125 USPQ 416.]

Regarding Claims 21 and 22, the tube [24] is functionally equivalent to a syringe needle inserted through the seal. The tube [24] functions to evacuate the air from the cavity. A syringe needle is merely a hollow tube that in the instant invention performs the same function as Pflanz's tube [24].

Response to Arguments

7. Applicant's arguments filed 06/16/2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Art Unit: 2832

8. Applicant argues that Kumbera fails to teach the tube provided within the seal. Figure 3 clearly shows the tube [47] is completely surrounded by the seal [51]. Thus, the tube is within the seal. Applicant also argues that the tube does not access the exterior environment. Figure 3 clearly shows one end of tube [47] having access to the exterior of the seal [51]. Applicant argues that Kumbera fails to teach a second end of the tube open to encapsulation material. This is not the case. The entire seal [51] encapsulates the vacuum interrupter and is, therefore, "encapsulation material". Figure 3 clearly shows the second end of tube [47] being open to the seal [51].

9. Applicant argues that Pflanz does not show a current exchange housing. The current exchange occurs between elements 46 and 47. This is clearly within a housing.

Conclusion

10. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

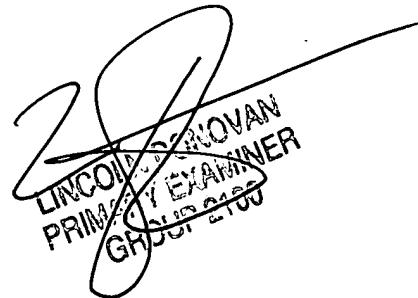
Art Unit: 2832

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Marina Fishman whose telephone number is 571-272-1991. The examiner can normally be reached on 7-5 M-T.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Elvin Enad can be reached on 571-272-1990. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Marina Fishman
June 29, 2005



LINCOLN J. NOVAN
PRIMARY EXAMINER
GROUP 2100